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# Montana Wilderness Association (1)

Max S. Baucus

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Senator \* or Department\*: **BAUCUS**

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Record Type\*: **Speeches & Remarks**

MONTH/YEAR of Records\*: **December-1975**

(Example: JANUARY-2003)

(1) Subject\*: **Environment**

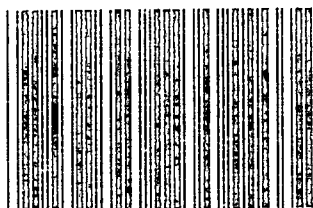
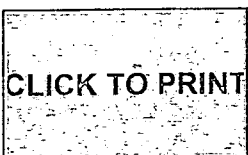
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject\* **Address to the Montana Wilderness Association**

DOCUMENT DATE\*: **12/05/1975**

(Example: 01/12/1966)

\* "required information"



BAUCUS

*Environment*

AN ADDRESS BY

MAX BAUCUS

TO THE MONTANA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

BILLINGS, MONTANA

DECEMBER 5, 1975

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE WITH  
YOU TONIGHT.

FOR YEARS NOW, WELL-MEANING AND KNOWLEDGEABLE  
PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT THE CHALLENGE FACING US IN THE WISE  
MANAGEMENT OF OUR NATION'S LANDS - BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE. THROUGH  
THEIR EFFORTS, AND BECAUSE OF THEIR INSIGHT, THAT CHALLENGE HAS  
CRYSTALIZED. SOBERING CHOICES MUST SOON BE MADE BY CONGRESS OVER  
HOW TO DEAL WITH THE APPARENT CONFLICTS BETWEEN COMMERCIAL USE OF  
OUR NATION'S FORESTS AND PROTECTION OF OTHER FOREST RESOURCES.

ALL OF US ARE AWARE THAT BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, THE FOREST SERVICE WILL PRESENT AN ASSESSMENT OF AMERICA'S RENEWABLE RESOURCES AND A MANAGEMENT PLAN TO COPE WITH PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENT. THESE DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FOREST AND RANGELAND RENEWABLE RESOURCES PLANNING ACT PASSED BY CONGRESS LAST YEAR.

CONGRESS IN RECOGNITION OF THE VAST PROBLEMS POSED BY TIMBER NEEDS AS OPPOSED TO AESTHETIC AND WILDLIFE VALUES, KNOWINGLY ASSUMED THE BURDEN OF FORMULATING THE ISSUES AND MAKING THE CRITICAL CHOICES. THE WORK WILL BEGIN EARLY NEXT SESSION.

THE FOREST SERVICE'S ASSESSMENT - OR THE INVENTORY AS IT'S CALLED - AND THE PROPOSED PROGRAM, WILL MEET THE IMPORTANT ISSUES HEAD ON. LIKE MANY OF YOU, I HAVE EXAMINED THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF THESE DOCUMENTS. PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES UNDER SIX DIFFERENT CATEGORIES WILL BE SET FORTH. THEY ARE:

1. OUTDOOR RECREATION AND WILDERNESS
2. WILDLIFE AND FISH HABITAT
3. RANGELAND GRAZING
4. TIMBER RESOURCE
5. LAND AND WATER
6. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

VIRTUALLY EVERYONE IS AGREED THAT ALL THESE ARE VITAL RESOURCE SYSTEMS. I THINK YOU WOULD AGREE WITH ME THAT THE FIRST TWO, OUTDOOR RECREATION AND WILDERNESS AND WILDLIFE AND FISH HABITAT ARE CLOSELY RELATED. THESE HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT CONCERNS OF THIS ORGANIZATION, AS HAVE BEEN LAND AND WATER. FEW WOULD DENY THAT THESE PARTICULAR RESOURCE SYSTEMS HAVE CONFLICTED WITH DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF OUR TIMBER RESOURCES. IF WE ARE TO END THIS CONFLICT RATIONALLY AND FAIRLY, IF WE ARE TO SPARE OURSELVES THE CONTINUED MISERIES OF CONFRONTATION SURROUNDING THIS ISSUE, CONGRESS MUST ACT. BUT IN ORDER TO ACT, WE MUST KNOW WHY AND HOW THE PROBLEM HAPPENED.

DEMAND FOR TIMBER FROM PUBLIC LANDS IN MONTANA, IDAHO AND WYOMING HAS STEADILY INCREASED OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, AND OVER THE ENTIRE PERIOD, THE INCREASE HAS BEEN DRAMATIC. AS FAR BACK AS 1952, HOWEVER, TREES WERE GROWING FASTER THAN THEY WERE BEING CUT - ON PUBLICLY OWNED LANDS. ON LANDS OWNED BY THE TIMBER INDUSTRY, HOWEVER, TIMBER CUTTING EXCEEDED GROWTH BY NEARLY SEVENTY PERCENT.

BY 1970, JUST FIVE YEARS AGO, THE PICTURE HAD CHANGED. TOTAL GROWTH IN THIS THREE-STATE REGION WAS UP 13 PERCENT. CUTTING, HOWEVER, WAS UP 73 PERCENT. WHILE TIMBER CUTTING EXCEEDED GROWTH BY 15% ON FOREST SERVICE LANDS, CUTTING ON PRIVATE LAND HAD RISEN 134 PERCENT ABOVE GROWTH.

IF THIS TREND ACCOUNTS FOR THE FACT THAT THE FOREST SERVICE IS AT LEAST 4.5 MILLION ACRES BEHIND IN ITS REFORESTATION PROGRAM, THINK HOW FAR BEHIND THE PRIVATE SECTOR MUST BE!

CONSIDER THAT APPROXIMATELY 300 MILLION ACRES OF COMMERCIAL TIMBER LANDS ARE HELD PRIVATELY. THIS IS MORE THAN THREE TIMES THE AMOUNT OF COMMERCIAL LAND IN THE ENTIRE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM. A WHOPPING 60% OF ALL THE NATION'S COMMERCIAL TIMBER LANDS FALL INTO THE PRIVATE CATEGORY IN WHICH THE AVERAGE HOLDING IS JUST 49 ACRES IN SIZE. THESE PARCELS OF COMMERCIAL TREES ARE OWNED BY FOUR MILLION PEOPLE FARMERS, WAGE EARNERS, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE.

THERE IS A TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR HELPING SOLVE AMERICA'S TIMBER NEEDS FROM THESE LANDS. REALIZING THIS POTENTIAL IN A RATIONAL AND ORDERLY WAY - TAKING CARE NOT TO RUIN SURROUNDING PUBLIC LANDS - WOULD HELP TO ALLEVIATE THE TREMENDOUS DEMAND FOR TIMBER FROM NATIONAL FOREST LANDS. WE COULD THUS EASE THE CONFLICT BETWEEN COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT, WILDERNESS AND RECREATION.

CONGRESS FACES THE TASK OF EFFECTING WAYS TO BRING THESE OVERCUT, UNREFORESTED, MISMANAGED PRIVATE LANDS BACK INTO PRODUCTION. WE'RE MISLEADING OURSELVES, HOWEVER, IF WE THINK THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT SWEEPING CHANGES IN OUR OVERALL FOREST MANAGEMENT POLICY. WE WILL NEED A SIZEABLE INCREASE IN FEDERAL COMMITMENT - IN MONEY, MATERIAL AND MANPOWER - TO CARRY OUT THIS MISSION.

WE'LL NEED A VIGOROUS NEW PROGRAM IN IMPROVING THE TECHNOLOGY OF TIMBER UTILIZATION. WHILE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THIS AREA, WE NEED A GOOD DEAL MORE. IN 1948, FOR EXAMPLE, AN AVERAGE ACRE OF DOUGLAS FIR YIELDED ABOUT 3,600 CUBIC FEET OF USEABLE LUMBER AND ABOUT 14,000 CUBIC FEET OF WASTE AND A LITTLE FIREWOOD. BY 1972, ANOTHER AVERAGE ACRE OF DOUGLAS FIR YIELDED 14,000 CUBIC FEET OF LUMBER, PLYWOOD, PARTICLE BOARD, CHIPS, LOGS, AND ABOUT 3,000 CUBIC FEET OF WASTE. EVEN SO, AROUND 6.5 BILLION CUBIC FEET OF WASTE IS LEFT IN THE FOREST AFTER HARVESTING EVERY YEAR. THIS IS EQUIVALENT TO ABOUT ONE-FIFTH OF ALL THE MERCHANTABLE TIMBER IN THE STATE OF MONTANA.

I'M TOLD BY THE FOREST SERVICE THAT WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY TO UTILIZE A GREAT DEAL MORE OF THIS WASTE, BUT THAT THE TIME LAG OF PUTTING THIS TECHNOLOGY TO USE IS TOO LONG. THAT TIME LAG MUST BE ELIMINATED AND CONGRESS MUST BE PREPARED TO MAKE THE NECESSARY COMMITMENTS FOR ACHIEVING THAT GOAL.

AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, YOU CAN BE ASSURED THAT I'LL BE LOOKING VERY HARD AT THE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-RANGE BUDGET PROPOSALS PRESENTED BY THE FOREST SERVICE ACCORDING TO HUMPHREY-RARICK ACT. I'LL BE LOOKING NOT ONLY TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT MONEY ISN'T BEING WASTED, BUT TO MAKE SURE ENOUGH IS BEING SPENT. THE ADMINISTRATION ISN'T EXACTLY ECSTATIC OVER THE MOVE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE RESOURCES FOR THINGS LIKE REFORESTATION. THE PRESIDENT VETOED AN EMERGENCY JOBS BILL THAT WOULD HAVE HELPED GET THAT JOB DONE.

NEITHER IS THE ADMINISTRATION EXCITED OVER EXPANDING FORESTRY INCENTIVES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PRIVATE LANDS WE JUST DISCUSSED. IN FACT, CONGRESS HAD TO VETO A RESCISSION OF FUNDS FOR THESE INCENTIVES - A RESCISSION PROPOSED BY THE PRESIDENT.

AS YOU CAN SEE, WE HAVE OUR WORK CUT OUT FOR US. WE NEED A FAR GREATER NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO WISE FOREST MANAGEMENT, NOT A SMALLER ONE.

IN CLOSING, I'D LIKE TO AFFIRM MY BELIEF THAT THE GROWTH OF WILDERNESS IS COMPATIBLE WITH HUMAN AND ECONOMIC GROWTH. ACHIEVING THIS COMPATIBILITY, HOWEVER, WILL REQUIRE MUCH MORE CREATIVITY, RESOURCEFULNESS AND NATIONAL COMMITMENT THAN WE'VE SHOWN IN THE PAST. WE CANNOT EXPECT TO REALIZE THAT GOAL WITHOUT FIRM CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SUPPORT.

I LOOK FORWARD TO THE CHALLENGE. I LOOK FORWARD TO ENSURING A CLOSE AND DETAILED CONGRESSIONAL EXAMINATION OF THE FOREST SERVICE'S LONG-RANGE PROPOSALS. I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUED HELP AND ADVICE FROM THE WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION IN THE DAYS TO COME.

NOW, I'LL BE HAPPY TO TRY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS OR OBSERVATIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE.